



Құрманғазы атындағы  
Қазақ ұлттық  
Консерваториясы®

ISSN 2310-3337

# Құрманғазы атындағы қазақ ұлттық консерваториясының ХАБАРШЫСЫ

## ВЕСТНИК

Казахской национальной  
консерватории им. Курмангазы

## BULLETIN

of Kurmangazy Kazakh  
national conservatory

№1 (2), 19.03.2014



I SSN 2310-3337

ҚҰРМАНҒАЗЫ АТЫНДАҒЫ ҚАЗАҚ  
ҰЛТТЫҚ КОНСЕРВАТОРИЯ

# Х А Б А Р Ш Ы С Ы

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КАЗАХСКОЙ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЙ  
КОНСЕРВАТОРИИ ИМ. КУРМАНГАЗЫ

## THE BULLETIN

OF THE KAZAKH NATIONAL  
CONSERVATORY OF THE NAME OF  
KURMANGAZY

2013 ЖЫЛДАН ШЫҒА БАСТАДЫ  
ИЗДАЕТСЯ С 2013 ГОДА  
PUBLISHED SINCE 2013

1

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АЛМАТЫ  
АЛМАТЫ  
ALMATY

2014

НАУРЫЗ  
МАРТ  
MARCH



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Қазақ ұлттық  
консерватория  
ХАБАРШЫСЫ**

**1(2) 2014**

**Шығарылуы:  
жылына 4 рет**

Журнал Қазақстан Республикасының Мәдениет және ақпарат министрлігінде тіркелген

Тіркеу туралы куәлік  
№13880-Ж 2013 жылдың  
19 қыркүйегінде берілген

Жауапты редакторлар:  
В. Е. Недлина  
Ә.Д. Шорабек

Беттеген:  
С. Досаева

Мұқаба дизайны:  
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Редакцияның мекен-  
жайы:  
050000, Қазақстан  
Республикасы, Алматы  
к., Абылай хан даңғылы,  
86  
Тел.: +7 (727) 261-5748

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Қазақ ұлттық  
консерваториясы

Учредитель: Казахская национальная консерватория им. Курмангазы

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ISSN 2310-3337

**ВЕСТНИК  
Казахской  
национальной  
консерватории  
им. Курмангазы**

1(2) 2014

выходит 4 раза в год

Журнал  
зарегистрирован в  
Министерстве  
культуры и  
информации РК

Свидетельство о  
постановке на учёт  
№13880-Ж от 19  
сентября 2013 года

Ответственные  
редакторы:  
В. Е. Недлина  
А. Д. Шорабек

Вёрстка:  
С. Досаева

Дизайн обложки:  
В. Е. Недлина

Адрес редакции:  
050000, Республика  
Казахстан, г.Алматы,  
пр. Абылай-хана, 86  
Тел.: +7 (727) 261-5748

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**BULLETIN of  
Kurmangazy Kazakh  
National Conservatory**

**1(2)2014**

**Published 4 times a  
year**

Magazine registered  
with the Ministry of  
Culture and Information

Certificate of  
registration # 13880-Ж  
from September 19,  
2013

Managing editors:  
V.E. Nedlin  
A.D. Shorabek

Page Makeup:  
S. Dosayeva

Cover design:  
V.E. Nedlin

Editorial address:  
050000, Kazakhstan,  
Almaty Abylai Khan  
ave, 86  
Tel.: +7 (727) 261-5748

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National Conservatory

***МУЗЫКА ӨНЕРІНІҢ ТАРИХЫ ЖӘНЕ ТЕОРИЯСЫ***

***ИСТОРИЯ И ТЕОРИЯ МУЗЫКАЛЬНОГО ИСКУССТВА***

***HISTORY AND THEORY OF MUSICAL ARTS***

UDC 398, 78.03

JÁNOS SIPOS

Senior researcher in Institute for Musicology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, PhD

## A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE TERME TYPES

The typology of vocal-poetic epic *terme* genre of Kazakh traditional music is considered in this article. It is based on structural analyses of different *terme* collected and notated by author.

**Keywords:** *terme*, kazakh music, *dombra*, epic genres.

**Ключевые слова:** *терме*, казахская музыка, домбра, эпические жанры.

**Тірек сөздер:** *терме*, қазақ музыкасы, домбыра, эпикалық жанрлар.

My comparative and analytical researches bear relation almost exclusively to the vocal folk music of different Turkic peoples. I do not consider myself an expert of the Kazakh instrumental music at all. However in Mangistaw men often accompany themselves on the two-stringed plucked *dombra* found in many homes which they often handle masterfully, and during my field work there in 1997 I had the several opportunities to collect instrumental pieces (*küy*).

The Kazakh *dombra* has two strings, tuned to a fourth (or, less frequently, to a fifth) and tied-on frets. It may be the forerunner of the Russian *balalaika*. Its western form is pearl-shaped and has 14 frets, while the eastern model has a spade-shaped or triangular body and seven or eight frets. The *dombra* is often played with a strum, striking both strings simultaneously. The scale of the *dombra* varies regionally in Kazakhstan. In the next figure we show the scales of the *dombbras*. Fretless play can extend this scale somewhat.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1. The scale of the *dombra*

Let me say a few words about a possible structural analysis of the so-called *terme* tunes.

### *Kazakh epic songs, the 'terme' types*

The *akins* are professional singers who have the gift of versification and poetic improvisation and also master the *dombra* as an accompanying instrument. They normally do not compose new tunes, nor are they expected to do so, and would probably be turned down if they did, but they vary and embellish the old tunes as best as their talents allow. More recently, some singers have taken to gathering in a bunch some songs performed one by one at long length in days of yore. The basic genres of the Kazakh *akins* are *maktaw* 'panegyric songs' and *tolgaw* 'didactic and denunciatory songs', which were usually cast in the

<sup>1</sup> See Žanuzakova, Z. (1963) [1], also in: Grove, p.415.



recitative forms (*terme* and *jeldirme*). The *akin* also sings songs in different genres (lyric, historic), using developed strophic forms. Kazakhs call the epic tale *jir* and storyteller *jirsi*.

The musical basis of Kazakh epic narrative is a steady declamation of seven- (4|3), eight- (3|2|3) or eleven-syllable (3|4|4) highly variable motifs of a small tonal range, sometimes with prolongations of the last syllable of the line. The performance of sections of tales usually begins with introductory exclamations in a high or middle register, after which text is declaimed with gradual descent to the lower register and the tonic. This descent is not even, usually taking place gradually as will be seen. All excerpts usually conclude in a slower tempo, sometimes based on the broad singing of words of the refrain.

The narrative form is used by the Kazakhs not only for epics, but it is also used for early types of songs and for the musical-poetic compositions of *akins* on social (and other) themes. When applied to recitative songs, the *jir* form is called *terme* or *jeldirme*. The latter term literally means 'horse's gallop', and is tied to the lively rapid-fire tempo of its performance. This quick recitation is in a fairly irregular rhythm, but above the even quavers of the *dombra* the rhythm of the tune grouped in triplets sometimes allows for the performance of several syllables, while at other times it runs ahead creating a peculiar dramatic tension which kindles and, more important still, sustains attention.

As I mentioned before we collected many *terme* tunes, typical segments of which are presented in my book [2]. The texts of the *terme* are usually didactic. They often begin by describing the singer's situation, not devoid of a grain of self-laudation. The main themes are the praise of ancient customs and Islam, the description of aging, the enumeration of misbehaviour and offensive deeds, as well as pieces of advice about the right social conduct. The wedding *bet-asar* tunes also belong here, on account not only of their musical form but also of their didactic texts - instructing the fresh bride how to behave appropriately in her new home.

Although the *terme* tunes are not strophic, descending strophic tunes can often be 'reduced' from them. It is typical of the performance of *terme* tunes that the first line is among the highest and the closing line is the lowest in register, while in between the lines are quite irregularly alternated. Some *terme* tunes are worthy of note for their simple, archaic musical patterns. Another noteworthy feature is that the a great part of *terme* tunes have *do* final while most tunes in the area move along a scale with the minor third.

I introduce abbreviations to indicate the structure of *terme* performance. Most melody lines move on or around a central note, or descend a few notes. This prompted me to identify the line with the solfa syllable of the central note around which it moves or to which it descends. The following forms can be differentiated among *terme* lines reciting on, or centered around, *do*:

D:	the line moves on the <i>do</i> note, leaving it only once or twice, and only in the direction of <i>re</i> (e.g. <i>drdd / dd d</i> )
D':	the line descends to <i>do</i> from <i>fa</i> or <i>mi</i> (e.g. <i>mmmr / dd d</i> ),
<u>D</u> :	the line has a section moving a note or two below <i>do</i> (e.g. <i>lidd / dd d</i> ),
D~:	the line circumscribe <i>do</i> (e.g. <i>rds,d / rd d</i> ).
D <sup>k</sup> , D <sub>k</sub> :	the line moves on <i>do</i> but ends on another, higher note (e.g. <i>dddd/dd r</i> ). The line-ending note is almost always only a second higher than the central note of the line. D <sub>k</sub> means the same, but this time the final note is one second below the central note of the line (e.g. <i>ddrd / dd t</i> ).
D↑:	indicates the rare ascending lines (e.g. <i>dddr / rm m</i> ).

I indicate the lines moving around *la*, *si*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol* or descending to these note in the same way. When describing the structures, I mark the tune-ending formulae *L<sub>cad</sub>* when the final note was *la*, and the opening calls launching major musical sections are marked with \*. These components well characterize the overall progression of the *terme* tunes.

I classify the *terme* tunes on the basis of the tonal ranges the melody moves in. Musically, the tunes in a group are coherent, further subdivision only overcomplicating the situation. Since the syllable numbers of the lines of a *terme* tune differ, they cannot be grouped by this criterion. Nor can they be categorized by final note, as closing on *la*, for example, is often additional, effected by the use of a refrain that does not integrally belong to the *terme* process. An attentive reader will certainly soon realize that in *terme* tunes with a wider tonal range there are lines and even longer units that constitute some *terme* tunes of a smaller gamut, thus the groups are not separated by fast lines.





Picture Üst-Yurt, nomad camp

*Terme tunes of the smallest compass (1-b3/4)*

The terme tunes of the smallest gamut mainly use different variants of D (*do*) – see above, reciting on or around *do*. *Re* and even *mi* might occur in them, but never as the central note. It is frequent that the introductory phrase of the refrain use higher notes.

The next example shows such a small-compass terme tune. As usual the tune is launched by an introduction of one or two longer notes (*iy*, *aw*). The flexible alternation of syllable number is apparent, while in line three the rhythm outlines the +>&~ scheme, though at times it strays from it quite far. The terme is closed by a longer cadence this time including the VII<sup>th</sup> degree, a unique occurrence.

$\bullet = 116$

Iy, aw,

Söz-diñ de ba-sı bis-mil-la, gey,

Bis-mil-la-sız ben-den is kıl-ma, goy,

Ka-tuw-lan-sa gar-tuw-ra,

Cad. Ke-le-siñ ay-da tap-sır-gan,

Ay, dü-ni-ye-n'aw ra-sul a, Al-la-ga,

i - - - - - yu - i.

Ex.1 Terme tune of the smallest compass. Scheme: \*DDDD+\*Lcad

I am demonstrating the structural formulae of the small-compass terme tunes No.1a-i (in my collection) below. I also include a reduced structure. It designates a hypothetical tune that might evolve from the given terme tune in the course of evolution. (\* marks the opening call.)

These simple tunes succeed one another in the order of "complexity", the smaller-range tunes of fewer motifs being followed by termes of more musical lines and wider compass.

No <sup>2</sup>	reduced structure	detailed structure
1a	D	DDDDDDDD+D <sub>cad</sub>
1b	D~	*DDDDDD~D~DDD~
1c	DT <sup>1</sup> TL	*DDDDDDDDDDT <sup>1</sup> T+L <sub>cad</sub>
1d	DDT <sup>1</sup> L	*DDD~DLLL L <sup>1</sup> L <sup>1</sup> LL  DDDT <sup>1</sup> LL L <sup>1</sup> L <sup>1</sup> +L <sub>cad</sub>
1e	DDTL	*DDDTL <sup>1</sup> LL+L <sub>cad</sub>
1f	DTT <sup>1</sup> k <sup>1</sup> L	*D <sup>1</sup> TTT <sup>1</sup> k <sup>1</sup> L+L <sub>cad1</sub> +L <sub>cad2</sub>
1g	DT	*D <sup>1</sup> *DTDT <sup>1</sup> T D <sup>k</sup> DDDT <sup>1</sup> +T <sub>cad</sub>
1h	D <sup>k</sup> D	*DD <sup>k</sup> DD <sup>k</sup> DD <sup>k</sup> D *R <sup>k</sup> DD <sup>k</sup> D <sup>k</sup> D <sup>k</sup> D+L <sub>cad</sub>
1i	R <sup>1</sup> DD <sup>k</sup> L	*DDDD R <sup>1</sup> R <sup>1</sup> R <sup>1</sup> R <sup>1</sup> DD <sup>k</sup> +L <sub>cad</sub>

Terme tunes of medium large compass (1-5/6)

<sup>2</sup> No. of the melodies in Sipos (2001)



What differentiates the terms of medium large compass from the above class is that some of their lines persist on the 5th, 6th, 7th degrees for some time. The tunes of the former group clacking on a few notes in the manner of twin-bar tunes give way to more singeable forms. No definite song form can be outlined, however. The melody contour of the short lines is largely incidental and chance or the singer's mood also has a great say in the succession of the lines. The musical lines follow each other in descending order, but there are some tunes that begin low and gradually rise, only to close deep down again. As the structural schemes of the table reveal, melody lines centered around *fa* are frequent.

Let me now show you a terme tune of medium large compass (ex.2). It can be seen well that a line progresses high, then the terme returns to the lower register.

$\text{♩} = 126$

Ey, Bi - lim - siz tuw - sa ul ja - man,

E - ki de - se ne ja - man,

E - ne ti - lin al - ma - gan,

Bi - le de bil - se kīz ja - man.

Ey, üš dö - gön - de ne ja - man,

Üš - kil - siz ki - yim bul ja - man,

Tört dö - gön - de ne ja - man,

Tö - re - sin tuw - ra ber - me - se,

Pa - ra - kor bol - sa biy ja - man,

Bes de - gen - de ne ja - man.

Ex.2 Terme tune of medium large compass. Structural scheme:  
\*R'RKMR'|\*D'TkTkTkt|TkTTDI+Tcad

The structure of the some terme tunes in my book (Sipos 2001) can be schematized as follows:

No	reduced structure	detailed structure
2a	MR'D'D	*MR'D'D <sup>k</sup> DD
2b	MR <sup>k</sup> D~L	*MR <sup>k</sup> R <sup>k</sup> D~D~   M <sub>k</sub> M <sub>k</sub> *M'D~D~D~   MRM+L <sub>cad</sub> +L <sub>cad</sub>   D~L'+L <sub>cad</sub>
2c	M <sub>k</sub> D'TL'	M <sub>k</sub> M <sub>k</sub> D <sub>k</sub> D'TTM <sub>k</sub> L'L
2d	M <sub>k</sub> RRD <sub>cad</sub>	*RRMM <sub>k</sub> D'   M <sub>k</sub> RRR*D <sub>cad</sub>
2e	F <sub>k</sub> M <sub>k</sub> D <sup>k</sup> D	*FF <sub>k</sub> M <sub>k</sub> F <sub>k</sub> M <sub>k</sub> D <sup>k</sup> D <sup>k</sup> D    F <sub>k</sub> M <sub>k</sub> S <sub>k</sub> M <sub>k</sub> F <sub>k</sub> D'D↑D'D
2f	M~D'TL	*M~M~M~D <sup>k</sup> D'   D~*TL
2g	FM <sup>k</sup> RD	FM <sup>k</sup> RRR↑R'DDD   RRR↑   M <sup>k</sup> R <sup>k</sup> D'   F~D'DD
2h	MRM <sup>k</sup> D	MRM <sup>k</sup> R <sup>k</sup> D   RF+D <sub>cad</sub>   RRR↑+D <sub>cad</sub>
2i	SR↑M~D	*SR↑D'DDDDD*D   *SFRDDD   M~DDDD   M~D

Similar lines constitute some *sınsuw* and also *Ya Rapazan* religious songs, indicating that the terme tunes are closely correlated with folksongs and with religious tunes. The main difference is that in performing a terme the musical lines alternate according to the invetiveness of the performer, while folksong performers more closely adhere to regular, repetitive structures. The question is still unanswered whether the regular or irregular lines are older. I myself tend to believe that irregular structure are older and regular forms evolved from them. At any rate, here one can observe the occurrence of a common musical idea in a more flexible and then in a more stabilized form.

#### Two-part termes (higher first part + lower second part)

Though rare, there are recitative tunes that break up into a higher first and a lower second part so that the two registers of recitation have at least one note in common. We only collected two of this kind. The following example shows a continuous recitation on the 7th-8th degrees, before sinking down into the usual low register.



$\text{♩} = 132$

Ew - e, za-man-da-sım da A - ral bay,

Bil-mey bir gal-dım ba-laңd', ay,

Tä-we-kel en - di goy šü-kir ed',

Aw-zī-ña al - ma ja-man - day,

Men bil-mey kal-dım da ka - pī-da,

Ey, ayt' al-may söz-diң par-kīn, ay,

Ö-kün-gön men goy pay-da jok,

Ka-yī-rīn ber - sin ar - tī - n'ay,

Ay - na - la - yīn daw A - ral - bay,

A - yī bit - ken - de ay d'ö-lör,

Jī - lī bit - ken jīl d'ö-lör...

*Cad.*

Ex.3 Terme tune of large compass. Structure: SSkM'FkM \*M~T'TkT'LkL+Lead

Ex.4 is also like that. The tune outlines the scheme  $S^k S^k M' R R M M R^k D D D D D \mid S^k S^k F_k R \uparrow \mid F^k R^k D D D^k D^k D^k D \mid D^k D D \mid R^k T L \mid T T^k T^k L^k S, S, S, L + S_{cad}$ . Towards the end, the tune sinks to lower *sol*, which is a unique feature. The four-line scheme reduced from that suggests a round song form  $S^k M' R D$ , as the next example confirms. Such tunes can also be found in the descending fifth-shifting pentatonic strata of Hungarian folk music.



Ex.4 Large compass terme tune reduced to a four-line scheme

### Special terme tunes

An informant sang Mixolydian tunes quite different from the rest of the other termes. Apart from their tonality, the tunes share the common feature of not being recitative but sung in an easily transcribed rhythm, in even quavers. Tunes No.6a-b also sung by the same singer have more distinct structure, more melody-like construction in rhythms tending towards 9/8 and 9/4, and ending on *do* and *la*, respectively.

Fig.2 A dombra player in Southwest Kazakhstan

### Texts of the examples and their English translation

Wherever possible, literal translation is given, otherwise the meaning is tried to be rendered as precisely as possible.

Ex.1 Terme 'didactic song', Turgan (cca.50), Mangkistaw.Tenge, 18. Sept, 1997.

Sözdiñ başı bismilla,  
Bismillasız pende is kılma.  
Katuwlansa kar tuwra,  
Kelesi ayda tapsırğan  
Dünyeni rasul Allaga.

The first word is bismillah,  
Don't start anything without bismillah.  
If he hardens with wrath,  
The Prophet will give the world  
To Allah next month.

Ex.2 Terme 'didactic song', Däwitbay (70), Mangkistaw train station, 16. Sept, 1997.

Bir degende ne jaman,  
\*Bilimsiz tuwsa ul jaman.  
Eki dese ne jaman,  
Ene tilin almagan,  
Bile de bilse kız jaman.

First of all, what is bad?  
A boy born without knowledge is bad.  
Secondly, what is bad?  
A self-important young wife  
Not heeding to her mother-in-law's word is bad.

Üş degende ne jaman,

Thirdly, what is bad?



Üşkilsiz kıyım bul jaman.  
Tört degen ne jaman,  
Töresin tuwra bermese,  
Parakor bolsa biy jaman.

A dress without hemming is bad.  
Fourthly, what is bad?  
A greedy bey who  
Breaches the law is bad.

Bes degende ne jaman,  
Bes waktiñ namazın,  
Kaza kilsa er jaman.

Fifthly, what is bad?  
A man who fails to say  
His five prayers a day is bad.

Altı dese ne jaman,  
Alğanşa alğan aruwiñ,  
Köp işinde küñkildep,  
Betinñen ursa bul jaman.

Sixth, what is bad?  
When the fairest lass you married  
Shows dissatisfaction to others  
And smacks your face, that's bad.

Jeti dese ne jaman,  
Jetkinşekke ok tiyse,  
Jer tayanbay turgızbay,  
Jan kiynagan bul jaman.

Seventh, what is bad?  
When a young man is hit by a bullet,  
He lies in agony,  
He cannot get up, that's bad.

Segiz dese ne jaman,  
Serke sandı at minse,  
Sergelden sapar jol šekse,  
Jürgen jolıñ oñbasa,  
Oylaganıñ bolmasa,  
Kapıda bolsa er jaman.

Eighth, what is bad?  
The one that sits on a bad-legged horse,  
Stumbling along the road.  
His road won't lead him right,  
His plan won't be realized.  
A man in trouble is bad.

Togiz dese ne jaman,  
Altın taktiñ üstinde,  
Tolıspay kalsa kan jaman.

Ninth, what is bad?  
When on a golden throne  
The khan is too conceited.

On degende ne jaman,  
Kaygili bolsa bul jaman.  
On bir dese ne jaman,  
Aramnan jıygan mal jaman.

Tenth, what is bad?  
Someone being sad is bad.  
Eleventh, what is bad?  
Fortune gathered with much struggle is bad.

On eki dese ne jaman,  
Akili jok kız jaman.

Twelfth, what is bad?  
A silly lass is bad.

On üş dese ne jaman,  
Kelin menen balaga  
Buyırmagan bolsa šal jaman.

Thirteenth, what is bad?  
When your wife and son  
Cannot agree with your old father.

...  
Kimnen kalmas bul dñniye,  
Kapıda öter bul zaman.

...  
But the life of all of us  
Will come to an end one day.

Ex.3 Terme 'didactic song', Izbasar (60), Mangkistaw.Aktaw, 15-17 Sept, 1997.

Zamandasım, Aral-bay,  
Bilmey bir kaldım balañdı.  
Täwekel endi šükür edi,  
Awziña alma jamandı.  
Men bilmey kaldım kapıda,  
Ayta almay sözdiñ parkin ay.

My good buddy, Aral-bay,  
I didn't know what'd happened to your son.  
Audacity is a fine trait,  
Don't mention me accursing.  
It so happened I didn't get word,  
What could I say now?

<i>Ökingen men goy payda jok,</i>	There is no sense in saying sorry.
<i>Kayırın bersin artına.</i>	May God rest him in peace.
<i>Aynalayın, Aral-bay,</i>	Dear Aral-bay,
<i>Ayı bitkende ay da öler,</i>	The month dies one day,
<i>Jilı bitkende jıl da öler.</i>	The year also dies.

*Ex. 4 Sketch of terme without words, Nurmuxan (61), Mangkistaw. Akşukir, 21 Sept, 1997.*

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#### Янош СИПОШ

*Старший научный сотрудник Института музыковедения Венгерской академии наук, PhD*  
**НЕСКОЛЬКО МЫСЛЕЙ О СТРУКТУРНОМ АНАЛИЗЕ ТИПОВ ТЕРМЕ**

#### Резюме:

В статье рассматривается типология вокально-поэтического эпического жанра казахской традиционной музыки *терме*. Она основывается на структурном анализе образцов *терме*, собранных и нотированных автором.

**Ключевые слова:** *терме*, казахская музыка, домбра, эпические жанры.

#### Янош СИПОШ

*Венгрия ғылым академиясы, Музыкатану институтының аға ғылыми қызметкері, PhD*  
**ТЕРМЕ ТҮРЛЕРІНІҢ ҚҰРЫЛЫМДЫҚ ТАЛДАУЛАРЫ ТУРАЛЫ БІРНЕШЕ ОЙЛАР**

#### Түйін:

Мақалада қазақ дәстүрлі музыкасы *терменің* вокалды-поэтикалық эпикалық жанр түрлері қарастырылады. Ол мақала авторының жинаған және нотаға түсірген *термелердің* құрылымдық талдау үлгілеріне сүйенеді.

**Тірек сөздер:** *терме*, қазақ музыкасы, домбыра, эпикалық жанрлар.